



SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES

November 13, 2024

Syphax Education Center, Room 131

Attendance:

		In-person	Virtual
Alison	Babb		
Christopher	Day	X	
Deborah	DeFranco (APS nonvoting)	X	
Jennifer	Djukic		
Kate	Froeb	X	
Elizabeth	Hans (ACSHB nonvoting)	X	
Desiree	Jaworski	X	
Lisa	Kaintoch (ACSHB nonvoting)	X	
Lisa	Kaplowitz		
Keirsten	Kelly		
Sheila	Kelly	X	
Candice	Lopez	X	
Amy	Maclosky (APS nonvoting)		
Lainie	Morgan	X	
Pablo	Moulden	X	
Lori	Pines	X	
Amy	Rzepka	X	
Darrell	Sampson (APS nonvoting)	X	
Mary	Sanders	X	
Kristen Anne	Smith		
Irena	Sullivan		
Medha	Tare		
James	Vell Rives	X	
Robin	Wallin (APS nonvoting)	X	
Guests:			

I. **Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 1:02

II. **Adoption of Meeting Agenda**

Meeting agenda was adopted by unanimous vote

III. **New Business and Reports**

Sheila introduced Dr. Tara Thiagarajan, Schools for Strong Minds Project, Sapient Labs. Tara is a neuroscientist studying brain function and mental health among adolescents. Since a big part of SHAB's work this year is on devices and mental well-being, Dr. Thiagarajan and Sapient Labs' work is very related to helping inform our work.

Dr. Thiagarajan:

Mind health bigger and wider than mental health and wellbeing, includes our ability to navigate life's challenges and the world. Also how do we see ourselves in the eyes of others, ability to adapt and change, and the mind-body connection. The environment our kids are growing up in is different than what current adults grew up with. Global Mind Project – largest and most comprehensive database on mind health in the world. Measures 47 aspects of mind health: demographics, diet, exercise, sleep, friendships, etc on 1.8 million people in 70 countries. Looking at how the environment is shaping our minds and identifying root causes of poor mind health. Use data to help schools, organizations, and governments make data-driven decisions and make resource allocation choices. Mind health has drastically changed since 2008 among adolescents, particularly among girls. New factors are emerging, including increased aggression towards others, hallucinations, suicidal thoughts. Two big factors driving this change: chemical environment (ultra-processed foods, plastics/plasticizers) and techno-cultural environments (smart phones, sedentary lives, family relationships). Also, lack of physical activity is correlated with worse mental well-being. For smart phones, the earlier the child gets a phone, the increased rate of distressed/struggling, particularly among females in adulthood. For females with a phone before the age of 9, over 50% struggle as adults. Kids are getting smart phones earlier: 13 years olds get their first phone at 10, on average, but 18 year olds, on average, got theirs at 13. Major disruptions are impact on sleep, quality of social bonds. Teens generally spend 4 hours of their phones a day, leading to less social interactions, physical

activity, social development, and understanding on how to navigate life. Starting to research different school environments to determine phone access and social interaction levels. Will be looking at different interventions to see what works and how that impacts social outcomes. Different countries may have different drivers for better or poorer outcomes for mind health. Focus should mostly look at phone access and food systems at the US level.

Schools for Strong Minds – trying to address root causes of mind health. Goals for the program include helping schools understand the state of mind health of students, and inform strategy, guide school improvement plans and target efforts and resources. Students get a detailed report to help them find resources and prevent poor mind health before it begins.

Subcommittee Reports:

Away for the Day

Exchanged emails and put research in spreadsheet of other districts and their outcomes after device policies were set in place. Collected graphics and posters for preventing device usage during the school day.

Share Table

There are now 20 Share Tables at APS schools and Mary created a spreadsheet listing all APS schools to determine share table status at the remaining schools. Some schools have informal tables. Committee members will reach out to the remaining schools to determine interest in setting one up or if they have one already.

Physical Education

Looking at policy to implement middle school recess in Fairfax which is simple and straightforward. Mandatory recess for 15 minutes each full school day. Discussed barriers at APS middle schools to see if there are budget implications or space and staffing considerations before making recommendations.

Survey

Draft survey asking parents to rank what they are most concerned about related with school health for their children. Next steps to take it to ACTL for review and input.

IV. Old Business and Action Items

Record of bot on this item, including a summary of the discussion on matters deliberated or decided

V. Adjournment

Meeting ended at 2:32